

Slave Housing Data Base

Building Name: Sherwood Forest Duplex
Evidence Type: Extant
Historical Site Name: Sherwood Forest Plantation
City or Vicinity: Fredericksburg
County: Stafford
State: Virginia

Investigators: Gary Stanton, Carter Hudgins, Doug Sanford, Arianna Drumond,
Kate Egner
Institution: Center for Historic Preservation, University of Mary Washington
Project Start: June 2007 **Project End:** 1/25/08

Additional Investigators: Daniel Miles and Michael Worthington
Institution: Oxford Dendrochronological Laboratory
Project Start: December 2007 **Project End:** December 2007

Additional Investigator: Dennis Pogue
Institution: University of Maryland
Project Start: 3-17-15 **Project End:** 5-13-15

Summary Description:

The Sherwood Forest duplex slave quarter is a one-story, side-gable-roofed, frame building, approximately 30 by 16 feet in dimension, supported on a stone foundation. The well-built structure is positioned on axis in relation to the nearby brick kitchen-laundry-quarter and the main house of the Fitzhugh plantation, both to the south. The results of dendrochronological testing have assigned a construction date of circa 1846. The symmetrical façade faces west, with doorways positioned towards the corners of the building, flanking two regularly spaced double-sash windows. Another window is located in the south end wall, and one window is centered in each gable. The exterior walls are sided with wide Hardieplanks, but sections of the earlier weatherboards are exposed in a number of locations. The spaces between the studs and the siding and within the interior horizontal sheathing boards were infilled with clay nogging. A 20th-century shed-roofed addition and small porch together cover the entire east side of the building, with doorways cut through the original rear wall to provide interior access.

The building is laid out with two rooms on the first floor and two others in the garret, all very nearly equal in size, with each space divided by a partition of horizontal boards. The ground floor rooms were heated by fireplaces that shared the central chimney, composed of sandstone with a brick upper stack. The first floor interior surfaces (wall boards, ceiling joists, underside of attic flooring) have been whitewashed; the rafters and the partition in the garret are whitewashed as well, and, although unheated, the garret also was used as a domestic space. Access to the garret rooms from the floor below presumably was provided by ladder stairs. A replacement open stringer stair is situated

in the NE corner of Rm. 1; what is likely to be the original opening for the stair in Rm. 2 is visible near the SW corner along the end wall.

Bibliography:

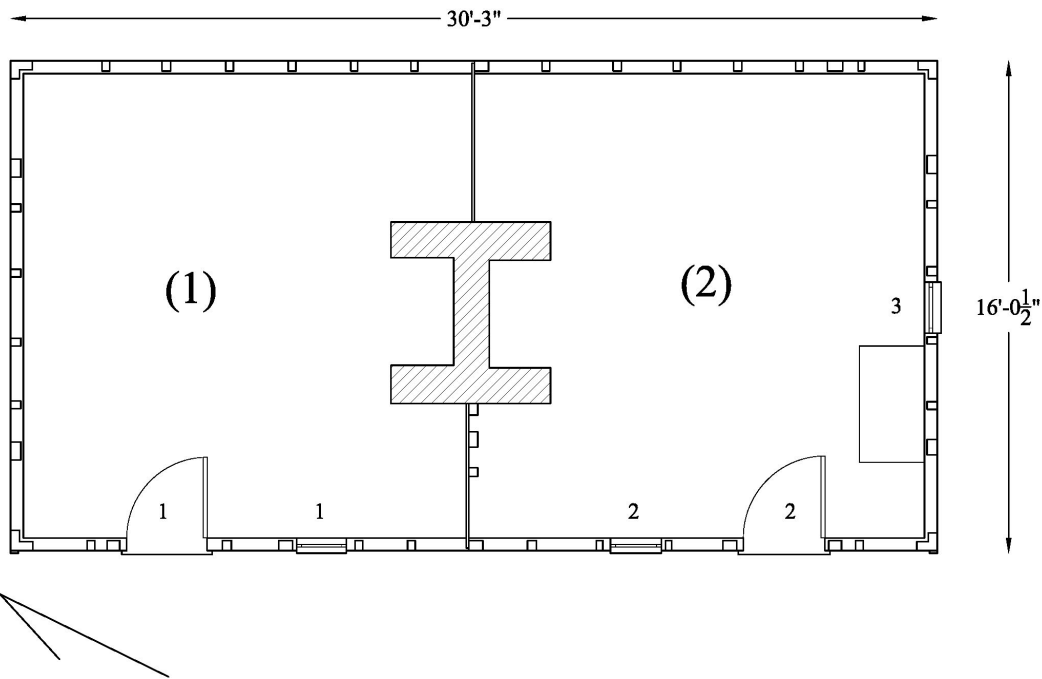
Miles and Worthington *The Tree Ring Dating of Eight Virginia Slave Houses* (2009)

See description and narrative prepared by Gary Stanton, with associated CAD drawings and documentary evidence.

Principal Construction Type: Frame

One Story – With Garret

Period I Footprint:



Number of Rooms: 2 down, 2 up (Period I); 3 in modern rear addition

- Dimensions:** (1) North: 15 ft. 3 in. (E-W) x 14 ft. 3.5 in. (N-S); 7 ft. 11.5 in. (H)
(2) South: 15 ft. 4 in. (E-W) x 14 ft. 9.5 in. (N-S); 7 ft. 11.5 in. (H)
(3) North: 14 ft. 10 in. (N-S) x 16 ft. 5 in. (E-W)
(4) South: 14 ft. 9 in. (N-S) x 16 ft. 1 in. (E-W)

Doors: 9

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Type:	Panel, with 4 lights	Door missing	Modern rear addition (not recorded)
Dimensions:	2 ft. 6 in. (W) x 6 ft. 4 in. (H)	2 ft. 7 in. (W) x 6 ft. 4.5 in. (H) – door opening	
Hardware:	Modern butt hinges	Modern butt hinges	
Swing:	In	In	
Replacement:	Yes		

	(4) Modern Closet	(5) Insertion	(6) Insertion
Type:	Board & Batten	Missing (doorway cut through original partition)	Missing (doorway cut through to modern, rear addition)
Dimensions:	2 ft. 5.75 in. (W) x 6 ft. 5 in. (H)	3 ft. 1 in. (W) x 7 ft. 3 in. (H)	3 ft. (W) x 6 ft. 7.5 in. (H)
Hardware:	Modern butt/butterfly hinges	Butt hinges	Butt hinges
Swing:	Out	Out	Out
Replacement:	Yes	Yes	Yes (cut into original rear wall)

	(7) Modern closet	(8) Closet	(9) Stairwell
Type:	Missing	Board & batten (for closet under stairs)	Missing
Dimensions:	3 ft. 1 in. (W) x 7 ft. 2 in. (H)	1 ft. 7 in. (W) x 6 ft. 1 in. (H)	3 ft. (W) x 7 ft. 1.5 in. (H)
Hardware:	Modern butt hinges	Butterfly hinges	Modern butt hinges
Swing:	Out	Out	Out
Replacement:	Yes; modern framing with 2 x 4 in. lumber	Yes	Yes

Windows: 7

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Type:	Double hung sash; 2/2	Double hung sash; 4/4	Double hung sash; 4/4
Dimensions:	1 ft. 7 in. (W) x 3 ft. 9 in. (H)	1 ft. 8 in. (W) x 3 ft. 9 in. (H)	1 ft. 8.5 in. (W) x 3 ft. 9.5 in. (H)
Hardware:	None	None	None
Shuttered/ Slide/ Swing:	Modern replacement	Modern replacement	Modern replacement

	(4)	(5)	(6) S. Garret
Type:	Not recorded; in modern addition	Note recorded; in modern addition	Double hung sash; 4/4 (gable end)
Dimensions:			1 ft. 6.5 in. (W) x 3 ft. 9.5 in. (H)
Hardware:			None
Shuttered/ Slide/ Swing:			Modern replacement

	(7) N. Garret
Type:	Double hung sash; 4/4 (gable end)
Dimensions:	1 ft. 6.5 in. (W) x 3 ft. 10.75 in. (H)
Hardware:	None
Shuttered/ Slide/ Swing:	Replacement

EXTERIOR

Foundation:

Continuous Masonry: Stone (sandstone)

Thickness: 1 ft. 8 in.

Height: @ SW corner: from ground level to bottom of sill, 3.5 in.

Bond: Irregular to random

Mortar Type: Possibly clay (little survives or is visible); later repointed with Portland cement and poured concrete

Joint: Other

Repaired: Yes

Shed/Porch: Yes; along east wall (20th century)

Roof:

Roof Form: Gable

Roof Covering: Modern asphalt shingles

Roof Framing:

Exposed: Yes

Form: Common rafters, with mortise and tenon, pegged

Rafter Number: 14 pairs, approx. 2 ft. 1.5 in. to 2 ft. 2 in apart, on centers.

Rafter Dimensions: Varying: 2 x 4 in.; 4 x 4 in; 3.75 x 4.25 in.; 3.5 x 3.25 in.; 2.75 x 5 in.

Collar Ties: Yes

Collar Dimensions: Approx. 2.5 x 4 in.; all removed but 1 at south end of south garret room.

Method of Joining: Surviving collar shows lap joint and 2 cut nails.

Height from Roof Peak: To top of collar – 2 ft. 3.5 in.; to bottom of collar – 2 ft. 6 in.

Height to Floor: From bottom of collar – 5 ft. 7 in.

Building Height: @ SW corner (from bottom of sill):

Siding to Soffit: 8 ft. 6.75 in.

Siding to Apex: 17 ft. 9.5 in.

Siding to Top of Eave: 9 ft. 5.25 in.

Ground to bottom of sill: 11 in. at south gable end, center;
3.25 in. at SW corner

Walls: Frame

Cladding: Horizontal – weatherboard/lapped (with machine cut nails); covered with modern Hardy plank

Beaded: No

Chimney (1):

Material: Brick (upper stack at roof line); stone base and lower stack

Location: Interior– Center

INTERIOR

Wall Framing: Timber frame, nogged (with clay)

Wall Finish: Sawn boards with 3-4 in. gaps between

Fireplace (1): End (Room 1)

Fireplace Material: Stone

Fireplace Overall Dimensions: Base – 5 ft. 9.25 in. (E-W) x 5 ft. 0.5 in.

Fireplace Opening Dimensions: 3 ft. 5.75 in. (W) x 2 ft. 9.5 in. (H); no depth available as filled in

Hearth Material: Removed

Hearth Dimensions: 1 ft. 4.5 in. x 4 ft. 9.5 in. (W)

Fireplace (2): End (Room 2); note hole for later wood stove above fireplace

Fireplace Material: Stone

Fireplace Opening Dimensions: 3 ft. 7.5 in. (W) x 3 ft. 1 in. (H); no depth as fireplace has been closed

Hearth Material: Removed and covered

Hearth Dimensions: Covered

Stairs: Yes (replacement stair set on raised floor)

Type: Enclosed

Stairwell Dimensions: 9 ft. 11 in. (L) x 3 ft. 1 in. (W)

Number of Treads: 8

Stair Tread Dimensions: 2 ft. 7.75 in. (L) x 10.75 in. (W) x 8.75 in. (H)

Subfloor Pit: No

Floor: Wood; 20th-century replacement

Note: Floor joists left in partial round, except at joint with sills, flattened top

Dating:

Dendrochronology Date: 1846

Dating Evidence:

Saw Marks: Sash sawn

Nails: Machine cut; wire nails in modern exterior siding.

Comments:

The duplex is in poor condition throughout, with extensive structural damage focused at the NW corner of the building due to the failure of the roof. Unless intensive measures are taken this building will not survive for long.

The duplex quarter is positioned on axis in relation to the nearby brick kitchen-laundry-quarter and the main house of the Fitzhugh plantation, both to the south. A frame smoke house that also likely dates to the mid-19th century is positioned on axis with the other structures, a few hundred feet to the east of the brick kitchen-laundry-quarter.

The structure was recorded as part of the Stafford County survey of slave-associated buildings (2015).